

**JOINT CAPITAL BUDGET MEETING
ENVIRONMENT, LAND ACQUISITION & PLANNING COMMITTEE
PARKS, SPORTS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Minutes

A joint Capital Budget meeting of the Environment, Land Acquisition and Planning Committee and the Parks, Sports and Cultural Affairs Committee was held at the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, in the Rose Y. Caracappa Auditorium, on Wednesday, **May 28, 2002**, at 9:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator David Bishop, Chair, Environment, Land Acquisition & Planning
Legislator Ginny Fields, Chair, Parks, Sports & Cultural Affairs
Legislator Cameron Alden, Member
Legislator Brian Foley, Member
Legislator Angie Carpenter, Member
Legislator Lynne Nowick, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Legislator Michael Caracciolo, Vice-Chair, Environ., Land Acquisition & Planning
Legislator Jon Cooper, Vice-Chair, Parks, Sports & Cultural Affairs

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Paul Sabatino, Counsel to the Legislature
Alexander B. Sullivan, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Ed Hogan, Aide to Legislator Nowick
Nanette Essel, Aide to Presiding Officer Postal
Fred Pollert, Director, Budget Review Office
Sean Clancy, Budget Review Office
Judith Gordon, Commissioner, SC Department of Parks
Tom Isles, Director, SC Planning Department
Barbara LoMoriello, Legislative Aide to Legislator Cooper
Ann M. Maguire, Little Red School House
Charles Bender, Suffolk County Parks Department
Carmine Chiusano, County Executive's Budget Office

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Eileen Schmidt - Legislative Secretary

(THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:50 A.M.)

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

We will begin the meeting. We have one card, Ann Maguire regarding the Little Red School House.

MS. MAGUIRE:

Good morning. I come this morning because we have a lot going on in Elwood regarding the

Little Red School House. And when this was purchased from Elwood back in 1987, I believe it was, the community was led to believe that was made a historical site. And now we have a library board and they're telling us that it is not an historical site and they're looking to take it over. And besides renovating and different discussion about it they're also talking about knocking it down and we are very concerned about this. The community purposely asked the County to take this building over because they did not take this building over because they did not want to see it destroyed. It has a lot of history to it and apparently back at that time Mr. O'Donohoe was the person who was involved and probably what happened is it went out of office at the time that this should have come up and it got slipped away. And if it is not on the historical rolls, I ask you to please pass a resolution and make it historical so that we can preserve this building.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. Thank you. Commissioner Gordon maybe you could come on up and we could talk a little bit about it.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, as you know we have had some discussion with the new Elwood Library District to use that building, but I don't believe anybody affiliated with the Elwood Library District is talking about tearing the building down. I think the people that are on the board of the new Elwood Library District are very sensitive to the historic issues of the building and want to maintain it as an historic building. And I don't think would have, you know, have any designs on really changing the integrity of the building or tearing it down. But again, we are having discussions with them we haven't come to any conclusion as yet.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Do you know whether it was place on historic register or --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- no, it hasn't been.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

And there was a question about whether it is in park actually dedicated to parkland.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Yeah. We're trying to determine that right now. Real Estate has been in contact with the County Attorney's Office to try to come to a determination, but it has not been dedicated to the County's Historic Trust.

MS. MAGUIRE:

(inaudible)

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Yes, you could've stayed up here actually.

MS. MAGUIRE:

(inaudible)

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

You have to be on the record so either at the podium or next to the Commissioner.

MS. MAGUIRE:

I would like to answer to the part that nobody from the library board said anything about tearing down the building. I attend their meetings and at the past meeting it was not only stated by Jerry Nichols from Suffolk Cooperative, but it was also stated by {Moller} Grossman who is on the board of one of the many things to do we could also not down the building and build a larger building. So it has been stated at public meetings. I was not the only one who heard it and other than one person who sits on that board all the other people live in the district about five years or less. So they are not aware of all the controversy and what we have gone through. I've lived in Elwood 41 years and I've been through all the issues of should we have a library shouldn't we have a library. I've been on different committees and I am for a library and there are other ways that we could have services in Elwood that are not being looked at. And I think to take something that means a lot to people who have lived in the community for a long, long time to benefit people because we live in a, I want issue -- society today I think is wrong. There's other ways that they can address it and to think that they can slip through and say well, it's not historical so we can take it over I think is wrong. I think that the people were led to believe this, so I think that they should be told that it is going to be a historical building.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Legislator Nowick.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

I had just a question for the Commissioner. This library, who determines whether or not this is a historical building?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, we certainly have the ability to do that. We have a department of historical services in the Parks Department. It's as you know Legislator Nowick we have several historic buildings in our County inventory and unfortunately we have to set priorities. And I have to be honest and say that the Elwood Li -- Little Red School House is not really ever been high on our list of priorities in terms of its historic importance. I do know that it got a lot of historic importance to the Hamlet of Elwood and I've heard that from the people who are involved with this -- with the new library district. I was not here when the County took it over so I can't really speak for what happened at that point in time, but, you know, and to speak to what the speaker has indicated I wasn't at the public meeting or anything like that was said. But all of my discussions with the representative from the library board as well as Mr. Nichols were that the intention was to preserve the building.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

What year was it built?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

1915 I believe.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

Would there be an avenue for the citizens of that community to petition to have that made an historical building on the record and this way it would be protected. Or is there --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- well, yes. They do have an avenue to do that I don't know whether it would in fact be listed. That's a determination for the State Historic Preservation Office in Albany. You know just because a building has a lot of importance to a particular community does not raise it to the level where they would list it.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

I understand, but there would be a way that they could at least apply for this --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- oh, sure --

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

-- if they had a group and maybe that would -- who can help this woman?

MS. MAGUIRE:

May I ask you , can't the Legislator's pass a resolution making it an historical trust?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, the Legislature could dedicate it to the Historic Trust, but again, I have to be perfectly honest to indicate to you that I don't know whether we in the Parks Department would recommend doing that.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

Okay. I understand that you can petition New York State Registry to make this building an historical building and I think that if you can leave your name over here maybe they can help you out, maybe not, but it certainly is worth a try. Okay.

MS. MAGUIRE:

Can I ask one more question? The Art League has been in there for the past, I think, 12 years and I understand that they've been paying about \$1900 a month. Not one penny of that was ever put back in the building. The building is in disrepair so even if they took it over for a library they're saying that they don't even have to go back to the people of Elwood to tell them to get a loan or a bond on this building to fix it up. And they're estimating beginning at \$500,000. I mean, in a time when taxes are soaring and school districts I don't have to remind you what they're going through. I think it's very unfair to go back to the people and say, oh, guess what you're going to fund to fix up this building and if we can buy it back from the County we might knock it down in three to five years. The thing is the story is not going out to the people and I'm hoping to sort out a lot of things because I myself and some other people fund to put out the peo -- the papers and we take the time to go around the community to inform it. This shouldn't really be our job, but we have to do it because nobody else is doing it.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Who's the Legislator?

MS. MAGUIRE:

Allan Binder. We've spoken to Allan; he's very informed of the issue.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

And what is he doing about it?

MS. MAGUIRE:

Well, we haven't spoken to him personally. We've spoken to Irene his Aide and the feeling we were getting is that he agrees with what we're saying and that's as far as its gone.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Why don't you place a phone call and ask him what he plans on doing about it. Maybe if you get a direct response from the Legislator whose district it's in you'll know where to go from there. Lynne, do you boarder that district at all or no?

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

I think I border Allan's district, but again, I want to ask you if you could leave your name and number.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Yes, we have her name and number right here. Do you -- okay, but I think first you should reach out to Allan Binder to ask what it is that he plans on doing about it.

MS. MAGUIRE:

So, one other thing, because where the Little Red School House is such a low priority on the list, what was done with all the money that was collected from the Art League?

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

That's a good question, Friends of Long Island Heritage.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

No. Money has been put into that building. To stand there and say that no money has ever been put into the building is really not a fair assessment.

MS. MAGUIRE:

Well, \$100,000 was put into the building when the Art League first went in there --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- in addition to that, excuse me, in addition to the money, yes. There was \$100,000 that the County and, I believe, it was Legislator Binder that initiated that resolution of capital improvements. And because we were treating it as an historic building, the Huntington Art League wanted us to spend money on things that would benefit them in terms of use of the building, but because we were treating as an historic building as we would any way we spent a considerable amount of money on the roof. I think the roof cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$30 or \$40,000, but because it was a wood roof. And I think that there were parking improvements that the Friends of Long Island Heritage did. I think they may have done the lighting, you know, there's been repairs done to the boiler and other issues in the building. But again, I don't have the break done with me.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

You know, actually today is a budget hearing and it's combined with the Environment, Land Acquisition and Planning Committee. This probably this discussion probably would be better on the Parks Committee regular meeting and maybe we could have some answers for her at the next meeting and discuss it and know where we're going with it. And then we'll invite Allan Binder to come to that meeting also.

MS. MAGUIRE:

And when is that meeting?

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Do you know the date?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

I believe it's June 5th I'm not positive, but I believe it's June 5th.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

You know what I will --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- yes, it is June 5th.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

June 5th at 12 o'clock.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

At 12 o'clock here:

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

It's on a Thursday, yes.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

And we will reach out and invite the people that we hope to get answers from.

MS. MAGUIRE:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

All right, you're welcome. Commissioner Gordon, do you want to just give us a synopsis and maybe respond to some of the Budget Review Office's recommendations?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, you'll notice that the Little Red School House is not included in here. And part of the reason why that is the case is that we have so many more needs than we are that I believe it's realistic for us to request. And it was very difficult to put the capital budget together this year knowing that knowing the economic climate that we're in. And the way we tried to do it was to, by the way, we have no new projects propose in the budget it's just ongoing projects that we have in the hopper. And when we made the -- when we prepared the budget, again, I took into account the economic climate that the County is facing as well as what I thought was realistic for us to actually get done in cooperation with the Department of Public Works. Because as you know we rely heavily on Public Works to assist us with just about all of our capital projects. So there is -- there is money we've requested money for our County campgrounds, we've requested money for equipment for parks that's the normal type equipment that we usually include in the

capital budget. There is also our paving and lighting project, which for the most part is paving. I think that this issue has come up in other committee meetings. Why is it called paving and lighting? I think that that's just the project name, but for the most part we do spend the money on paving. We do -- we've requested additional money for our historic projects particularly we are just about to go out to bid on Third House which is in Theodore Roosevelt County Park in Montauk which probably for the full restoration of that building I would say a million dollars plus. And we have finally accumulated enough money where we feel confident that we can go out to bid and get some substantial improvements made on that building. It's critical that we get that this year because I don't know whether we're going to make it through another winter like we had this previous winter.

We included money for improvements to County marinas that's an ongoing project. And in addition to improvements at County golf courses which is also an ongoing project. Two of our bigger projects that are included in here I believe that were reduce were construction of maintenance and operation facilities at County parks. We've got an ongoing plan -- what we've been trying to target is to do one building a year. We've done the golf course at Indian Island. We've done Cedar Point County Park and next on the list is the golf course at Timber Point where our building is woefully in adequate especially to deal with our organic maintenance program. And we have just recently found out from DPW that the million and a half that we've budgeted for that is not enough. So we've got to -- we're going to be trying hopefully trying to deal with that issue in the course of this year.

In the last really big project is the restoration of Smith Point County Park. I know that that was cut and by both the Executive Office and I think that BRO concurred to some extent in terms of the erosion problems that we're having at the beach that it's probably not a good idea to make improvements to the facilities there before we address the erosion problem. We're in the process right now, we have a meeting scheduled -- it might have been better able to scheduled it before today's meeting, but we are meeting with DPW first thing tomorrow morning to address this issue. Because as you know we also have the problem of the Flight 800 Memorial which is there and is also somewhat threatened certainly, if we have the continuing weather that we've had. We do need to take some measures, but in terms of the operations facility our maintenance building for that particular site, one of the recommendations has been to move it back off of the beach. And what our intentions would be is to cut back on what the main building that's current on the beach is used for and try to move much of that operation to a new building further back in the parking lot which would not be threatened the way the building on the beach is. But we do need -- the erosion issue is a problem that we will need to address and the County is going to have to deal with that issue. We're hoping that we may get some help with the dredging project that's going to happen at the or that's planned to happen at Moriches Inlet. We've gotten some indication that in more of a positive vain along those lines, but you know, until the -- until somebody signs their name at the bottom of the form I don't want to count on anything. But we -- hopefully we'll be coming to you with further information.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

May I ask you a question? I think I had asked awhile ago for your master plan of Smith Point County Park and I notice also in the Budget Review that they had asked for it and didn't get it either. Is there --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- well, I don't think they asked for it. You know I'm not sure of the protocol whether we're supposed to supply it or DPW. We did just get copies of that I think within the last couple weeks

and certainly we can get a another copy our of the consultant to provide to BRO.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

So the master plan was put together by a consultant?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

And it was completed when?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

I think the last completion was the end of April maybe beginning of April.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

So it was just completed?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

It was completed and then two years ago we decided to look at the erosion issue and Greeman Pedersen brought in a coastal specialist to access that situation for us and that's really what amendment was.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Can I get a copy of that master plan?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Sure.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

All right. So I guess my question is though that -- so you have not really looked at the erosion problem --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- oh, we have, we absolutely have and we've got -- we have a series of alternatives that have been recommended to us. However, they are very expensive.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

And we would be inclined to have to foot that bill or --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- well, unless we got some help from what we're hoping will happen is that the Army Corps will dredge the Moriches Inlet and the material that they dredge out will be used to nourish the beach. However, that's not it's something that needs to be done -- beach nourishment has to be done on an ongoing basis. Just one dredge project putting even if it's 200,000 yards of sand on the beach is not enough. It's got to be an ongoing nourishment program.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

When is the Corps planning on dredging?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, that's the big question. We understand it maybe this fall, but we've not gotten confirmation on that.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. Jim, do you have anything to add to that about Smith Point?

MR. SPERO:

No. Just that we were very concerned with the erosion and we put two pictures in the report that highlights just how close the ocean is now to the dune. And so we just wanted to send a note of caution about investing large sums of money in Smith Point at this time until the nourishment program is underway.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

And do you agree with that as far as --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- oh, yeah. Yes. Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. I interrupted so continue. Oh, Fred.

MR. POLLERT:

In the beach report that was just issued by the Budget Review Office the time line for the Army Corps of Engineer plan has been postponed until 2005. So it doesn't appear that you're going to have a immediate short term type of solution that you can look to the Army Corps with respect to the dredging.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, we're hearing differently lately, Fred, just very lately. And to go back to the Flight 800 Memorial again, I believe that the families have begun to put pressure on the federal government. Federal elected officials who may have something to say about that.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Who -- I've always been interested in knowing who actually began the project and who approved the project of having the memorial so close the edge of the ocean?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

I was in the department Legislator Fields, but I can't necessarily speak to the specifics of how that played out.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Does Budget Review know who was involved in that? Was another government also involved in or was it just the County?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

No. I believe it was just the County. I mean, in terms of, you know, any other governmental organization in terms of regulatory issues probably. I don't really think that we had a whole heck of a lot of choices unless you were to put something like that in the parking lot. I think

probably the place that it's located right now in terms of being on the beach side probably is the better place to be than other locations. You know other than putting it in the parking lot I don't know whether there really was a better location.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

With the erosion I would think that they would have to have been a better location.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, again, in the parking lot perhaps.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Yeah, or maybe -- well, it's done anyway. Okay. Please continue.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

I think I'm finished. I think unless you have questions.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Legislator Carpenter.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

On project 7167 the Indian Island Golf Course Project relocating demolition of the huts and the remaining phase I guess was the relocating of the gasoline fueling station. Part of that was an idea I see to construct a 19 hole to be kind of like a swing hole for any other hole that you're working on.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Right.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Is that the case in any of the other golf courses?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

No. We don't have -- well, Timber Point we have 27 holes.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Right.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

But no, West Sayville we do not have an additional hole. It was an idea because that area is so opened now and really not being used for anything else that's why we came up with the alternative of constructing another hole.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Is there much construction anticipated or anticipated being needed for the holes that you really feel that you need to have an additional hole to divert golfers to?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Well, we would probably continue with expanding the tee boxes which is an ongoing project that we've been doing at the three Timber Point, West Sayville and Indian Island. So that would probably continue and then, you know, as time goes on you need to deal with issues too; you

might need some greens improvements as well. It's a nice thing to have and it would mean that if we were doing construction on a hole we would have the ability to maybe not have it in use for a particular day, but not lose somebody getting a round of 18 in. In addition, this organic maintenance program is still an unknown to us. And we don't know, you know, down the road we don't know what issues we're going to be dealing with in terms of that. And whether or not, you know, we may have a problem with a particular green or whatever. If that were the case it might be nice; it would be nice to have the additional hole.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

But I think predicated on the remarks that you started with, the fact of the tight crunch that we're in, the fact that this would be nice to have if we could. If we have to look at something's not being done it seems to me that this might be one of the things not the relocation of the gas tanks or of the other things that you're planning for there, but the creation of this 19th hole might be something that we might have to put aside so that we could continue. So I know there was some recommendations of things that Budget Review thought could be put off and there is a working group that has been working on the capital program. And you know from my perceptive I want to make sure that we're doing everything, you know, the campgrounds that you want and all of the other things that you need to be done. So my question to you is I think I already know what the answer is from the fact that it would be nice, but it's not going to be catastrophic if we're not having this this year.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Sitting here today, no, it's not going to be catastrophic. I hope a year from now I'm not saying that it would be, but.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

But then again with --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- but we would like to move those gas tanks that's something that we are really like to get done.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Right. I agree. You know everything else that's slated for that really needs to be done and I think with the 19th hole any repairs that need to be done if you have to have a temporary green or you have to move up the tee boxes while you're working on a tee box I think, you know, most of that can be accommodated. Because for the most part it's been awhile since I've been out there, but I remember Indian Island being in fairly decent shape.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Oh, it's in very good shape.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Yeah.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

And we hope to continue having it in very good shape.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Yes.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Because as I think BRO pointed out the golf courses are our cash cows.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Absolutely.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

And we want to make sure that we don't lose that.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

A little bit of knowledge is a dangerous thing, but isn't the reputation of Indian Island as a golf course is that it's very short and loses rounds as, you know, in the golfing community? People (inaudible) and say ah, it's a short -- you know, I mean, perhaps it's an opportunity to lengthen the course and enhance its reputation. I don't know if it suffers from a lack of rounds. Maybe you as many -- it maximizing rounds anyway.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

It's not -- four years ago it suffered, but the last couple of years it's as a matter of fact if any of you read Dan's Papers, Dan's Papers had a very nice little blurb about Indian Island last week. So it's --

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

-- so then there's no need to lengthen the course to --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- no. I don't think that's a critical issue, Legislator Bishop.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

What about the clubhouse, does it get its fair share of outing because I remember that clubhouse not being large enough to really accommodate an outing?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

No. But we do have a new restaurant operator at Indian Island who is there approximately a year now who has done a fantastic job. Has brought in considerable, considerably increased amount revenues to the operation and he himself is actually plugging outings also. So I think that that's, you know, that's a slow thing.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Right.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

The return or the increased outings doesn't happen overnight, but he's done a lot I think to help with that. There's also a lot of competition now out in Riverhead. There's a lot more golf courses than there were five, six years ago.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

It still is a very nice course for an outing if it is a little bit shorter it probably isn't such a bad thing cause you don't get your best golfers at an outing. But I would ask that you look at perhaps projecting how we might do something better with the clubhouse. I think that might be a better investment --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- we planned to do that --

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

-- that way we could pull in more outings.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

We planned to do that.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

We're actually in -- we're in the planning stages of doing that now.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

Great. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Legislator Nowick.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

Yes. Just a few comments and to Legislator Bishop I just want to say a short course is all relative to the golfer.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Don't ask Annika Sorenstam.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

Just as a thought I note and I agree with Legislator Carpenter, sure everybody wants the extra hole in case you have to repair another one, but I did notice over at a very prestigious golf course here in Fort Salonga, Indian Hills. They're repairing two holes over there. They've shutdown the two holes and what they make you do is go around twice on two equal holes. And if you have to do --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- oh, sure. Oh, there's ways around it.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

Right. And they pay big bucks to be a member over there and everybody gets through it and so that was a thought. And the other thing I really want to say on the record is that your golf courses are beautiful.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Thank you.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

You're really doing a nice job.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

It's not an easy thing, but we do our best and we try real hard.

LEGISLATOR NOWICK:

I think you should be proud of them.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

I wanted to ask about Peconic Dunes. There's a comment on page -- do you have the same book that we have?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

The BRO comments?

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

The review.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

On page 273.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

It talks about the funding requested by the Parks Department was not intended for any purposes that we believe are most urgent. During a recent visit to the facility the cafeteria and the cabins appeared to be in dire need of renovation. However, these renovations are not addressed in the department's request. We recommend that the department make use of the remaining 632,406 for the most urgent needs of the facility to meet health and safety standards and that no further funding be included in the capital program until these improvements are made.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

We are in the process of doing that right now. And I beg to differ a little bit with BRO because, yes, the cafeteria does need to be replaced, but the building that we would like to see built there would include a cafeteria that would still be used by the current campers that use the facility as well as provide year round use also. And we have I think for the last two or three cycles we have put in a grant application to the state for matching funding to build a new building and we intend to submit another proposal this year. And we're hoping that in some point in time we're going to because we keep asking and there's going to get to a point where they're going to have to say, yes.

And as you -- I think BRO also indicated in here Cornell Cooperative Extension is now managing the facility for us and we're working very closely with them to make sure that we make the necessary improvements that we need to make. One of the big issue, we did bring water to the site I think it was two years ago, but now we need to do a plan. We brought water to the site, but now we have to do a plan for the water distribution to all of the buildings and we're in the process of doing that right now. Actually, I think the planning may be done and we're hoping that that will probably if it needs to go out to bid it will go out to bid this year if not we'll bring in a contractor to do that.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

In the cabins, when are you looking to do something with the cabins?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

We maybe slowly but surely we maybe addressing cabins as we go along. However, Cornell did have a good idea about -- well, one of the issues that we're thinking about is bringing in prefab buildings to replace some of the cabins. So that's an issue that we're looking at right now. And then Cornell's had also some ideas of perhaps trying to go out and find some private funding on a per cabin basis whereas maybe the local hardware store may support the restoration of one cabin and maybe you'd put a little plaque on the cabin indicating their support. That's something that we've been talking about with Cornell also. It's a lot easier for them to do fund raising like that then it would be for us.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. What about the comment on page 271 where they're talking about the funding should be changes from serial bonds to G for general fund transfer. Do you agree with that?

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

I don't necessarily have a problem with it.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

How do we, I mean, does that mean --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- I think that that's an issue for the Budget Office and Budget Review to deal with than necessarily we in the department.

MR. SPERO:

Yeah. This is for the ongoing replacement of Parks equipment and according to Local Law 23 of 94 ongoing projects should be funded on a pay as you go basis. So our recommendation is just in conformance with that Local Law. If you change the funding and when the operating budget comes up sufficient funds are not included the budget for pay as you go projects we can change the funding back to serial bonds.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay.

MR. SPERO:

Or bond anticipation notes.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. Does anyone have any other questions?

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

(inaudible) that Jim is making that comment that he I think it's important when we do get into that operating budget process to, you know, stay focused on that and to remind us of that if the funds are not included in the operating budget that they, you know, that you need to tell the County Exec's Office to make sure they are included.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Also I really don't anticipate that the operating budget could be increased by this at least the Parks Department operating budget I don't think could be increased by this amount.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

But I think it's something that you're going to have to raise with them so that they are aware of it.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

We should talk a little bit about the Vanderbilt, but Lance Mallamo apparently is on his way so maybe we --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- I can't comment on the Vanderbilt you really need to talk to them. I'm not trying to shirk any responsibility it's just that, you know, that's really -- we don't necessarily oversee that.

LEGISLATOR CARPENTER:

They work with DPW.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

Yes. They do work directly with DPW.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. Okay. Do you have anything else that want to --

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

-- no, I don't think so.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. Jim.

MR. SPERO:

I have nothing else to add on the Parks Department.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Okay. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GORDON:

You're welcome.

CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:

Legislator Bishop you can bring your Environment meeting.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

This is a continuation of the same hearing, right. I don't have to -- okay. My cursory read of the capital budget is that the multifaceted land program has been kept at the same level because the money for the affordable housing component has been separated out. But if you merge that back in we'd be still remaining at 13 million where we are this year, is that correct?

MR. ISLES:

That's correct. It's 13.3 if you add in the current affordable housing proposal.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

Right. Let me just ask a couple of broad background questions. Farmland Preservation is funded in two places because it's inherently part of the multifaceted program and yet it has its own capital line which there is a million dollars in for next year?

MR. ISLES:

I think that was for this year. I don't think there's any money separate for that for next year.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

Oh, there isn't. Okay. So that makes sense because the Farmland Preservation Program we have multiple sources of funding right now, right and it's under subscribed if anything?

MR. ISLES:

We have multiple sources of funding including the sales tax program which has a dedicated funding stream for farmland to the tune of four to five million dollars a year. We also have the remnants of the Greenways Program, which is a 70-30 partnership with the municipalities. There is still some funding left in that. There is still an old capital fund for farmland that's about at the moment seven million dollars in a balance. We, obviously, have farms in different stages of acquisition at this point.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

But even at the earliest stage of acquisition we have more resources than demand at the moment.

MR. ISLES:

Yeah. I think at this point we do, yeah.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

Okay. Okay. How about on open space the same analysis in terms of what we have even at the beginning stages of the contract. What we have in the contractual commitment and resources available. Do we have sufficient resources to cover?

MR. ISLES:

Okay. Just very briefly, we have here again, multi -- open space is also purchased under a number of programs including sales tax programs, capital programs, the old Greenways program etc. The very rough number in terms of the amount in the bank at the moment is probably in the range of approximately \$60 million. In terms of what's spoken for and here again, these are approximate numbers at the moment we probably have about 10 million in contract. We probably have close to 30 million in either accepted offers waiting contract or very serious or close to completion of negotiations. We then have I think the balance would be covered by planning step resolutions that have been authorized and whether those will actually come forward we don't know at this point.

The other source would be the Legislature has authorized an application the Environmental Facilities Corporation, which would bond against the sales tax. The Legislature's approved the SEQRA determination of that; that will potentially provide \$41 million for open space and 21 million for farmland and we expect an answer on that sometime this coming fall. So in the future that could also be accessed.

CHAIRMAN BISHOP:

Thank you. I think that concludes our hearing. Thank you.

(Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10: A. M.)

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